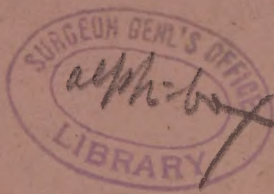


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VALK (W. W.)

REMARKS ON DIET;

BY W. W. VALK, M. D.





REMARKS ON DIET,  
IN THE TREATMENT  
OF THE  
SICK AND CONVALESCENT,  
ACCORDING TO THE METHOD OF  
REASON AND COMMON SENSE.

BY

W. W. V., M. D.

*W. W. Valk*

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"They never want a guide, who take the straight road."

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## PREFACE.

THESE are indeed the days of literary fecundity. It is an old saying, that "the more heads the better the counsel; because nothing is more common than heads, and nothing so unusual as good advice." Men write books and publish them for several reasons; among these, perhaps, the most prominent are, the extension of the general stock of information, and the *correction* of the *errors* into which preceding writers have been betrayed. My motive may be justly ascribed to the latter reason, in presenting to every unprejudiced reader the following pages. I know that public scepticism, with regard to the medical art, is fostered and cherished by the publication of the contradictory opinions of its professors, and in most cases, too, on points so apparently obvious and intelligible, that every one constitutes himself a judge of their merits. One author tells you that *liquid* food cannot be tolerated by a *weak stomach*; and another, that *solid* food is highly injurious; from which the reader very readily concludes, that the question is altogether unimportant, and eats just what he happens to fancy. As a general rule, the sick, or valetudinarians, are seldom capable of healthy reflection. They are almost always *seeking* for causes of fear and anxiety; (if they will not come unbidden,) hence they are very apt to suspect the seeds of disease in every dish, and poison in every cup, "when doctors disagree."

The Emperor Adrian prepared an inscription for his own tombstone, and was killed by the *great number* of physicians who attended him. To him may be likened that unhappy patient, who shall submit his case to the treatment recommended by discordant authors, whether on dietetics, or general professional subjects. The dyspeptic, and the hypochondriacal, are usually credulous, yet wanting in faith. Anxious for relief, they fly from physician to physician, expecting much, but getting little. Patience is severely taxed, and at length almost exhausted, when some kind friend steps in to sympathize and counsel. The blue pill has been

taken, and the diet measured with *scrupulous accuracy as to quantity*, but there has been no relief. Mercury has been condemned, and a *generous allowance* of food advised, yet all in vain;—what is to be done? Thanks to the *friend* whose sympathy has stepped in just at this critical moment, the *skilful physician* has not yet been tried,—the “*directions for diet according to Hahnemann’s method*” are yet to be tested, and the anxious sufferer, with hopes revived, sends for this long sought for *doctor*. Reader! is this a caricature, or a “lively sally?” If you are as sensible as I take you to be, I may safely appeal to your candor and enlightened judgment for the truth of the portrait.

It is a very common opinion, that “the sick” require but little food of any description. Indeed, a *sick* person can eat scarcely any thing; and, under all circumstances, the directions for a sick man’s diet are necessarily limited, and should be particular. When the period of sickness has actually passed, and the patient is convalescent, he may be directed, *according to a common sense method*, to partake of more nourishing food. But to allow a *sick* man to eat “*beef, mutton, smoked tongue, raw lean ham, fresh cheese, puddings, dumplings, etc., etc.*,” is a species of empiricism altogether novel in the science of gastronomy. Who would not be *sick*, if it were only to hear the delightful words “the patient is allowed, Venison and Wild Fowl, Turkey and Pigeons, Soups, Jellies, Butter, Eggs, Sweet Potatoes, Cauliflower, Green Peas,” and a host of other articles equally desirable, and all constituting the most substantial diet that any man could wish for in the most perfect health. Generally speaking, a sick person cannot eat for lack of appetite; but, “according to Hahnemann’s method,” patients are blessed with the most extraordinary powers of digestion; for “unless stricken out by the physician,” they may eat “hard Boiled Eggs, Buckwheat Cakes, and drink Buttermilk.” Under what circumstances, any or all of these articles may be allowed to “the sick,” is not stated; nor can I easily discover in what code of dietetics, so remarkable a diet is permitted, except that which is of modern invention by the disciples of homœopathy, who, giving medicines in doses so infinitely small, are anxious to balance the account by allowing “the sick” to feed luxuriously.

A patient may be suffering from *fever*, or he may be a martyr to *dyspepsia* in its worst form; but what of that? In the “directions for diet, in the treatment of the sick according to Hahnemann’s

method," the patient is allowed to partake of a bill of fare, fit for an alderman; and, for aught that is known to the contrary, he may eat to repletion. But if he should happen to *smell* a bottle of Cologne water, or a cake of Rose soap, there is no telling the amount of injury he might sustain; therefore these pernicious articles are "strictly forbidden."

In the remarks on diet, which I purpose making for the benefit of all persons interested, I distinctly and unequivocally intend to be understood, as utterly opposed to the nonsense of "Hahnemann's method," or *any other method* but that which is founded on reason and good sense. I will not insult the community, by taking it for granted that human intelligence is at a shocking discount;—so extravagant, indeed, that I can *tickle it with a straw*. If I cannot offer my readers *novelty*, I can, at all events, give them a *dish to think upon*, and they *will* reflect, unless so far committed to the absurdities of Hahnemannism, as to be beyond the influence of any thing but "Tom-foolery" in some shape or other. Acknowledging my obligations to the several writers of distinction, who have made this subject their study, I submit what follows to public judgment.

W. W. V.

Flushing,  
January, 1843. }



"Physicians, considered as a body of men who live by medicine as a profession, have an interest separate and distinct from the honor of the science. In pursuit of this interest, some have acted with candor, with honor, with the ingenuous and liberal manners of gentlemen! Conscious of their own worth, they disdain every artifice, and depend for success on their *real* merit! But such men are not the most numerous in any profession: some impelled by necessity, some stimulated by vanity, and others anxious to conceal ignorance, have had recourse to various mean and unworthy arts to raise their importance among the ignorant, who are always the most numerous part of mankind."

GREGORY'S DISCOURSES.



## REMARKS ON DIET.

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THE term Diet, in the ordinary acceptation of the word, is applied to the various substances which we take into the stomach, for the purpose of supplying materials *for the formation of blood*, and the nourishment of the body. The immediate connection of this subject, with the comfort and health of every person, and the interest which it excites amongst people of every grade of knowledge, cannot be a matter of surprise, when we consider its importance, either as regards the preservation of bodily or intellectual integrity.

A very large number of the diseases to which we are subject, arise from errors in Diet ; therefore, attention to our food is not only of great consequence in a sound state of body, but is likewise *essentially* necessary in the cure of every disorder to which the human frame is liable ; indeed many of these can be cured by an appropriate Diet alone. Dr. Arbuthnot, who wrote on this subject about a century ago, very justly observes, that what we take daily by *pounds*, must be at least as important as what we take seldom, and only by grains or teaspoons full. That Diet exercises a powerful influence in modifying the animal

economy, cannot be denied, however reluctant we may be to alter our opinions or habits.

It would not be particularly useful here, to determine whether or not man is properly a *herbivorous* or *carnivorous* animal: from the formation of his teeth, as well as the structure of his stomach and intestinal canal, we may reasonably infer that he is neither one or the other *exclusively*. His whole digestive system appears adapted to *every kind of food*, so that he may be able to accommodate his diet to climate, habit and situation, whether moral or geographical.

Food is introduced into the stomach with the object of being converted into a fluid, fitted to become a constituent part of the living body: it might, therefore, naturally be presumed that substances, already of an animal nature, and similar to the structure they are intended to supply, would be better adapted for this purpose than any other kind of aliment; and this is the case, for animal food contains a greater quantity of nutriment in a given bulk, than any kind of vegetable substance.

In *health*, diet may be left, in a great degree, to the inclination or the taste, as far as regards the quality of the food; and, although diseases sometimes originate from repletion, yet, in general, the appetite may be considered as the best regulator of *quantity*, when the food is simple, and the appetite is not pampered by rich sauces and high seasoning. In *disease*, however, a directly opposite rule is to be observed; the regulation of both the *quantity* and the *quality* of the food is of the utmost importance. It will not do to leave the patient to himself, or to permit him to be guided by his appetite, for the taste is often so perverted, as to desire that which would prove injurious, if not eminently hazardous to life. Many substances,

also, though wholesome in themselves, are rendered obnoxious by cookery ; whilst on the other hand, the art of the cook, in many instances, corrects the detrimental quality of the food : therefore, dietetics and cookery are important matters of consideration in the management of the sick and convalescent.

It is a general opinion that gelatinous matters, or meats which readily yield *jelly*—such as Veal and Lamb—are the most easily digested, and, at the same time, the most nutritive. This is not so ; for, with the exception of *poultry*, the flesh of *young* animals is even less easily digested than that of the *old*. The middle age of animals affords the most digestible food ; and none is so much so as tender *wether* mutton of four or five years old. For this reason, Mutton is better fitted for the sick and convalescent, than either lamb, veal, or even beef ; for the last is not so easily digested, though more nutritive.

Venison is far more digestible and nutritive than mutton, but is more stimulating. In every instance, gelatinous and glutinous food is *less* digestible than solid meat ; therefore it is ill adapted to the sick or invalids, although it may contain more nutritive matter.

Nothing tends to lessen the density of the fibre of every kind of animal food, so much as keeping it for a certain time before it is cooked. In this case, the tenderness is the result of incipient decomposition, which, however, should never be allowed to advance so far as to present the slightest trace of taint in the food of the convalescent. In all persons recovering from sickness, the vital forces are weak, and easily disturbed by very slight causes. If, under these circumstances, food is eaten which has been kept too long, the consequences may be embarrassing ; either



productive of a relapse into the original disease, or the formation of a new one.

All *acute* diseases require, more or less, *abstinence*; particularly when the object of the treatment is to lower the system; and in many *chronic* affections, it is equally as essential. Admitting the truth of this, we at once perceive the necessity of the *strictest* observance of the directions of the physician on this subject. These are, however, not only frequently neglected, but very often opposed by both nurses and friends; and indulgences, which are presumed to be of too trivial a nature to cause any injury to the sick, have often been followed by alarming and fatal effects. In the convalescence from fevers, patients have been known to suffer most severely from a *single improper meal*; and in one instance, in which the relations of the individual were justly assured that all *danger* was past, a dinner of *pork and beans* brought on symptoms which caused death in less than a day.

But, although abstinence be requisite during the existence of an acute disease, still it may be injurious, when too rigidly maintained after convalescence is actually formed:—it often induces a new train of symptoms, not unlike those for which it was judiciously prescribed, and the removal of which it has aided, namely: increased force of the heart, accelerated pulse, headache, and probably delirium. As health returns, and the functions of the stomach are restored, the appetite becomes also established, and various articles of food are desired. In general, the wishes may be gratified by a moderate indulgence; yet, in very many instances, the acquiescence of the physician should be obtained. It is, indeed, as much the duty of a physician to recommend and regulate the

kind of diet which is best suited to each individual case, as to prescribe remedies for the removal of disease.

In examining the relative value of the various articles of diet adapted to the sick and convalescent, I shall necessarily have to be brief, and the first which claims our attention, is—

*Milk*.—We know that this is the food of almost all young animals—its digestibility is therefore evident; nor can there be any doubt of its superiority *immediately* after it is taken from the cow, and *before* its component parts have had time to separate. When this separation is effected either spontaneously by time, or artificially by other agents, its digestibility is in a great degree lessened, and its properties altered. The qualities of milk are *strengthening* and *nutritive*; it is mild and soothing, and does not excite the system as much as beef tea or other preparations of animal food—indeed, it has rather a tendency to produce langour and disinclination for exercise. I speak now solely of *Cows' milk*, as that of the Goat and Ass are by no means in general use. In its pure state, milk is best adapted to strong stomachs; yet in cases where it is desirable to supply the system quickly with nourishment, milk, in *small* quantities, is an excellent aliment. It is *not* suited to a dyspeptic or weak stomach, from its tendency to acidity. To obviate this, it may be taken with *lime water*—thus forming a useful combination. In all *acute* diseases, milk should be *prohibited*, and in its undiluted state, is not suited to the convalescent. In many *chronic* diseases, such as spitting of blood, the early stages of consumption, the scrofulous affections of children, chronic dysentery, and various spasmodic and nervous complaints, milk forms the most appropriate diet, especially

if prepared with bread, arrow root, rice, and other farinaceous substances.

*Eggs.*—The kind sympathies of friends, and their desire to do something for the sick, often prompts them to recommend the yolk of a raw egg, beaten up with sugar and water, with the addition of a little wine, as a light and nutritive diet in convalescence, and even in disease; but eggs are *less* digestible in this form, than when plain, soft boiled. Yet in whatever manner cooked, they *always* *favor costiveness*, and are of a heating nature. In every case of a deranged stomach, they are to be carefully avoided. Under the advice of a physician, they may be advantageously taken in numerous states of recovery from sickness. The eggs of the common hen and guinea fowl are much the best.

*Oysters.*—The opinion is almost universal, that *raw* oysters are very nutritive and easy of digestion. That they are nutritive, is true; but as to their digestibility, I have strong doubts. In general, however, whether taken raw or cooked, they agree with most stomachs; and, in convalescence, may be taken in moderation. As food for the *sick*, I would not recommend them in any form.

*Fish.*—This kind of diet is altogether less nutritive than that of land animals, but far more so than vegetables; and, from the great variety of species, they present every degree of digestibility. They may be divided into two classes—those with fat, and those without. To the first class belong the eel, mackerel, salmon, etc.; and to the second, the cod, flounder, trout, etc. All of the first class are more or less difficult of digestion; consequently, they are *altogether improper* as food for the *sick*, no matter *how* cooked. The second class, if simply *boiled* and taken



without much butter, are more congenial to the stomach, and more easily converted into wholesome nourishment. Still I would not advise fish of any kind either to the sick or convalescent ; and in any case where the bowels have been the seat of disease, and remain in an irritable state, they are altogether inadmissible. *Fried* fish are wholly interdicted.

With regard to a *vegetable diet*, and its propriety as a kind of food fitted to the use of the sick, it is only such vegetables as are of the mildest description, that *can be allowed*. Turnips and Carrots, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Brocoli, and Asparagus, will constitute a sufficient variety. All, or any of these, when prepared for the sick, should be well boiled in two distinct waters, until they are soft, and in such a state as not to leave any thing undissolved which might act as an irritant on the bowels. They are all moderately nutritious, and free from any stimulant quality : hence their adaptation to a weak stomach, except in cases where that organ is so much embarrassed as to permit them to undergo fermentation, and thus prove flatulent. Notwithstanding the interdiction of *Tomatoes*, “according to Hahnemann’s method,” I can safely recommend them as an article of vegetable diet to the sick in most cases, and as very appropriate for convalescents. Sweet and Irish Potatoes, Spinach, Green Peas, or Beans, are entirely out of place in the *sick room*, and it is only in particular instances that I would allow them to the convalescent.

*Fruits*.—These, whether taken *dried or fresh*, produce effects so exceedingly diversified, and so intimately connected with the condition of the patient, that they become more or less proper as diet for the invalid, according to circumstances. For the *sick*, every one of

the *stone* fruits should be rejected, except the Peach : this last may be permitted in moderation, if perfectly ripe. *Roasted Apples*, with the core and skin carefully removed, are safe and salutary for the sick, if food is allowable. They possess slightly laxative properties, and should only be forbidden when the bowels are rather too free. Perfectly ripe Oranges, are grateful and wholesome to all invalids ; the juice alone, however, should be taken, and the pulp wholly rejected. Grapes are also salutary, care being taken not to swallow the skin or seeds. The Strawberry is easy of digestion. and slightly stimulant. It may be freely eaten, and is often of much benefit to both the sick and convalescent. Currants, Gooseberries, and even Raspberries, are not altogether free from objections in their *fresh* state, and if *dried*, they are *wholly inadmissible*. Under certain conditions of body, Prunes may be allowed and advised by the physician ; but to partake of them *ad libitum*, or without due caution, might tend to ultimate injury.

Every variety of farinaceous food, excepting Wheat or Oat bread, may be considered as only modifications of Starch, containing but little nutrition, and therefore *suited* to the sick. The opinion is very common among all classes of persons, that Sago, Tapioca, Arrow-root, etc., are very nutritive, and perhaps for no other reason than because of their mucilaginous character when mixed with boiling water. But this is an error ; and if they were *very* nourishing, they would be ill adapted for a sick man's diet. In general, *Rice*, properly prepared, is preferable to any of the other farinacæ, particularly if the stomach is at all inclined to acidity. In the convalescence of children, farinaceous food is universally ordered. By many persons it is made of bread, so as strongly to resemble *Pap*. As a

diet even for a healthy child, this form cannot be advised; for no description of food so soon becomes sour, and is consequently to be avoided. For children who are sick, and also during their convalescence, no diet is more suitable than *Arrow-root properly prepared*. As the method for so doing is important, I give the recipe for making—

#### ARROW-ROOT MUCILAGE.

Take one tablespoonful of Arrow-root powder, and adding as much *cold* water as will make it as thick as cream, rub it well with the back of a spoon, until it is completely mixed, (using a *pint* bowl for the purpose,) then pour boiling water over it, and stir it carefully until a soft mucilage is formed, and, lastly, boil it for five minutes. It may be sweetened much or little, and a small quantity of *lemon juice* added. Any other addition, such as cinnamon, etc., must not be used, as these precipitate the Starch: for the same reason when flavored with wine. Port wine should be avoided.

#### FLUID ALIMENTS.

Of these, the best and most commonly used drink for the sick, is *water*, and this should be as pure as possible; for the qualities of water are as different as the sources from whence it is obtained. What is generally called *hard water*, should be totally excluded from the sick room;—the only *proper* kinds being Rain, River or distilled water. By filtration, the two first are rendered tolerably pure.

The influence of Water upon the animal system is twofold:

As an article of diet.

As a medicinal agent.

In health, man is provided by Nature with water as a drink. The sensation of thirst is the natural call for fluids,



either to facilitate the process of digestion, or to remove a hot, dry condition of the mouth and throat. If thirst cannot be satisfied, or is purposely resisted for a long time, the results will be nervous fever, and inflammation of the lungs. A deprivation of food can be longer tolerated, than want of drink, and the sensation of thirst, when carried to an extreme point, is absolutely intolerable. We require water in a state of health to dilute our food, and to correct its stimulant properties; for without it in sufficient quantity, our habit would become too full and inflammatory: total abstinence from fluids would produce death. But if a *due quantity* be salutary, *too much* is injurious, as it induces dyspepsia, by promoting spontaneous chemical changes in the food taken. As a diluent *in health*, *Water is the only true and wholesome drink*, and fully adequate to every purpose for which it is naturally provided.

In every disease marked by a dry skin, and an unnatural heat of the surface, constituting *fever*, Water, as a medicinal agent, is imperiously demanded. In all such cases, the desire for water, or other cooling fluids, should be always gratified. If *much* fever be present, there will be *much* thirst, and the supply should be equal to the demand. In a hot state of the body, with a dry skin, and impeded perspiration, a sufficient supply of cold water is necessary, and best calculated to counteract these symptoms. A distinguished physician, to prove this fact, has asserted that "cold water is the only true remedy for fever.

In excessive perspiration there is also great thirst, which is caused by the waste of the fluid part of the blood. Now, in this condition of body, *cold* drinks of any kind would be injudicious. In preference to these, *bland* and *tepid* drinks should be given, not only to supply the waste mentioned, but also to keep up the perspiration. Warm

water might be deemed suitable for the purposes stated ; but, as it is *very apt to produce nausea*, other drinks are employed ;—yet in all these, the *water* which they contain is the beneficial agent. In the *sick room* there are various kinds of beverages perfectly proper ; such as—

*Toast Water*, which is very mild and simple. Care should be taken in making it, that the bread is not burnt, as that would be apt to spoil its flavor, and render it disagreeable.

*Barley Water* is very useful. It is one of the oldest and *best* diluents in fevers, and slightly nutritive. It is *seldom well made*, therefore I give the process :—Take two ounces and a half of Pearl Barley, and four pints and a half of *soft water*. First wash the Barley well with cold water ; then pour on it half a pint of the measured water, and boil for fifteen minutes. Throw this water away ; heat the other four pints, pour them on the barley, boil down to two pints, and strain it. Simple Barley Water, mixed with an equal quantity of milk, and moderately sweetened, forms an excellent substitute for breast milk, for infants who must be brought up with the spoon.

*Gruel*, is less mild and demulcent than barley water, and no matter of what it is made, whether of Oatmeal, or other similar substances, it has a tendency to acetous fermentation, particularly when sweetened. If it is made *thick*, it cannot be advised as an aliment for the sick, more especially if fever be present ; and if *thin*, it is no better than plain water.

*Tea*.—In cases of fever, a cup of *Black Tea*, (and no other kind can be allowed,) with sugar and milk, poured into a tumbler of *cold water*, forms a pleasant and refreshing drink. Generally speaking, Tea is a favorite beverage with the sick ; but it should not be taken just after eating.

In no case is it proper to take it *strong* ; for if so, its stimulating and astringent properties might be injurious.

Tea, made of *Mint*, *Sage*, *Balm*, etc., are very often used. These are not a shade better, or indeed so good as *Toast Water*. By many of the Lady Bountifuls, who are always in attendance on the sick, such drinks as *Apple* and *Tamarind Tea*, *Lemonade*, and *Raspberry Vinegar*, are, in their disinterested kindness, recommended. They should never be given without the consent of the physician, as mischief might be the result ; for in many cases of disease, the condition of the stomach is such as to render them positively hurtful.

*Coffee*, *Chocolate*, and *Cocoa*, are wholly to be excluded from the *sick* room, and only can be permitted by the physician in certain conditions of convalescence, and then in very moderate quantities.

*Spirits*, *Wine*, *Wine-whey*, *Porter*, *Ale*, etc., should never be given in disease, unless directed by the medical attendant.

The circumstances under which nutriment is required, in cases of sickness and convalescence, are as much within the province of the physician, as the prescribing of medicine. Now, with regard to the *number* of meals and the *time* best adapted for taking them, no general rule can be given ; for, although in a state of *health*, we daily take *three* meals, yet in the altered condition of the system in *disease*, it would be improper to advise any regular number of meals, or any stated times for taking them.

In the *decline* of diseases, it is of the utmost importance to *regulate* the diet ; because, at these periods, the appetite is usually sharp and craving. Therefore, the best time for breakfast will be eight o'clock, dinner at two, and the



evening meal at seven. The periods between meals should never be so long as to weaken the powers of the stomach by protracted fasting.

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The preceding observations being of a general character, it appears to be now proper to offer a few remarks in relation to the diet which is necessary in certain classes of diseases. It is not the less essential to be as particular, when sickness has terminated in convalescence.

It is a fortunate circumstance, that in all *fevers*, and other affections accompanied with febrile symptoms, the *appetite* for food is either *entirely lost*, or greatly lessened. This fact is proof sufficient of the *utter impropriety of urging* a patient to eat under such circumstances. As the desire for food is almost or entirely wanting, *simple fluids*, are all that the patient needs, and all that the stomach can bear. *Animal food of any description* or *however prepared*, is strictly prohibited, unless, under certain conditions of the system, it is ordered by the physician. The mistaken kindness which is so apt to show itself in the sick room, by urging the patient to partake of broths and soups, has too often been followed by mischief, in most instances too unsuspected in its origin. Happily, indeed, the inclination of the invalid frequently revolts from it; for all experience condemns its administration.

During the actual presence of fever, no other food should be given but *Sago*, *Barley Water*, *Gruel*, *Arrow-root mucilage*, or preparations of that character. These, sweetened to the taste, and a little lemon-juice added, are most suitable; yet care should be taken to give them in *small quantities*, and at intervals of five or six hours. For

drink, the most salutary beverage is *cold water*; next to this, I advise plain *Toast Water*, or, if preferred, a cup of *Black Tea*, poured into a tumbler of water. The last is to many persons peculiarly grateful. With a due degree of care that the patient does not eat too much, ripe fruits may be given.

When the fever has subsided, or entirely gone off, a better diet may be permitted, and here it is that friendly zeal o'ersteps the bounds of prudence in so many instances. That word *debility* has slain its thousands, by inducing the prevalent belief, that it must be removed by nourishing and stimulating food, with wine and other exciting drinks. It is an error to which life has been too frequently forfeited. It is far more *safe* to confine the diet, for some time, to vegetable matter only, giving it in moderate quantities at a time, and very gradually changing to a more substantial and exciting food. This may be done by first mixing *Milk* with the Arrow-root mucilage, and taking a small quantity of milk alone, occasionally. *Rice*, as a diet for convalescents, is far too little thought of or used. When well boiled, and mixed with chicken broth, or beef tea, or gravy which *has been cooled* and the *fat* removed, it is, in my opinion, the *very best* diet in early but decided convalescence. Beef tea, Mutton broth, etc., may be allowed in greater quantities, as the health improves; after which, *fish* may be resorted to, not because they are more digestible than animal food; but, as being less stimulating, they are less likely to produce too much excitement.

Plain water, Toast-water, or Lemon-peel-water, are quite sufficient as drinks, and *Wine*, or other stimulants, are *entirely prohibited*, unless expressly ordered by the medical attendant. If wine, porter, etc., become necessary during disease or convalescence, both the kind and

quantity of either should be regulated by the Physician. Taking into consideration the degree of debility present, with the age and previous habits of the patient ;—from half a pint to a pint of wine may be taken by an adult. Young persons not only require less, but it may be sooner discontinued ; for, as a general rule, they recover from sickness quicker than adults. As health becomes established, all stimulants must be gradually withdrawn.

In the “ Cyclopædia of Practical Medicine,” Art. *Fever*, it is remarked “ that many persons who have struggled through a most dangerous fever, have, from imprudent exposure to cold, been seized with intense inflammation in some organ, which has rapidly destroyed life.” This warning should be heeded, and the patient should not leave his bed until strength is considerably restored. From an observance of this rule no danger can result ; but from its neglect, the greatest risk may be incurred. “ A word to the wise” is, or ought to be sufficient.

In fevers which are termed *eruptive*, it is necessary to be more cautious with regard to diet and exposure, than in general fevers. I shall instance *Measles*, *Small Pox*, and *Scarlet Fever*.

It is known to every Physician, and should be remembered by all who have charge of families, that after an attack of *Measles*, there is often left a troublesome cough, or other pulmonary symptoms, inflamed eyes, severe toothache, and, very frequently, a harrassing diarrhœa ; and, in very young children, a *Canker of the Mouth* may supervene and prove fatal. Now, if any or all of these affections can be generally *prevented* by proper care, it is better to be *particular*, and thus avoid evil, than to be *negligent*, and have to meet it by a second resort to the physician. It is therefore advised, that the patient does

not too soon return to the use of animal food, or venture too early to exposure to cold and night air. Flannel should, by all means, be worn next the skin, whether it be summer or winter, for two or three months after the disease has disappeared.

*Scarlet Fever* is very often followed by *dropsical* symptoms, and, although we may not be able to remove these in every instance *by a careful attention to diet and regimen*, still, the effort should be made with diligence and proper caution. Nor should it be forgotten in these cases, that the bowels require our particular care, and that the slightest deviation from their *natural* action, ought to be immediately communicated to the physician.

After *Small Pox*, particularly if it has been severe and of the confluent variety, the unsuspected seeds of *Scrofula* may make their appearance and be brought into full activity. This will most assuredly be the case, if there exists any *hereditary* predisposition in the constitution; and we shall then have swelled glands, ulcers, and abscesses. These all demand the attention of the physician or surgeon. Such consequences may, however, be avoided in a majority of instances, by a judicious *diet*, and *change of air*, as soon as the patient's strength will justify a removal. *Milk*, *poultry*, and *Mutton*, plainly cooked, will afford a diet free from stimulating properties, and sufficiently nutritive for the period of convalescence.

It sometimes happens, after an attack of *Small Pox*, that we may have to contend with the *Erysipelas*, or *St. Anthony's Fire*. This affection is, in many cases, very severe, and must not be left to *domestic* treatment. Should it occur independent of any other disease, the same attention is required to diet, etc., as in other eruptive fevers.



*Scrofula*, in some of its forms, is often manifest as a disease of the young, and the influence which *diet* has in modifying and relieving its symptoms, appears to be generally admitted and very well understood. The food should be simple and nutritious, consisting of a larger proportion of *animal* matter, particularly in childhood, than would be required under ordinary circumstances. It should be *very plainly* cooked. For scrofulous children, who have been recently weaned, a diet of milk, in which *suet* has been boiled, can be confidently recommended. Every description of *pastry* or *confections* are *positively injurious*, and therefore strictly forbidden. A due regard should be paid to the *quantity* of food taken : it should be limited ; and rather *less* than the appetite demands.

From errors in diet, and the consequent irritable condition of the stomach and bowels, *convulsions* are not unfrequently the result. Too great attention can hardly be bestowed upon the regulation of the quantity and quality of the food, in all those cases where there is a liability to, or actual suffering from convulsions. Medical advice should *always* be demanded as the only safe course. In children who have had convulsions, and are on the recovery, many persons think it proper to keep them *almost starved*, as a measure of precaution against their recurrence. This rigid system is not at all necessary, and by no means to be followed. When convalescent, it might be advisable to remember the following directions : In a *full* habit of body, with a short neck, and a marked tendency to affections of the head, the diet should be spare. In childhood, the use of animal food must be altogether prohibited, and *very moderately* used by adults. Milk, farinaceous matters, weak broths, and vegetables, are most suitable, besides being much more safe. Under

opposite circumstances, or when the habit of body is *thin*, the diet should be much more nourishing, yet entirely free from stimulus. All the lighter kinds of animal food, such as poultry and fish, with a due share of vegetables, can be safely advised. In every convulsive disease, involving *affections of the head, wine and all fermented liquors, must be wholly excluded*: for neither *circumstances or period of life*, can justify the indulgence, or sanction the risk incurred of an apoplectic exit.

In that singular disease, *St. Vitus' Dance*, (Chorea,) and the more formidable *Epilepsy*, although a tonic plan of treatment may have been perfectly proper, yet it by no means follows that the diet should be rich or stimulating. Even in the convalescence from either, no particular plan of diet ought to be pursued without the advice of the medical attendant. With respect to *spirits, wine, and fermented liquors*, however, *the rule is absolute*, and the patient must take them (if at all) at his peril.

Whatever may be the nature of the diet recommended, it is essential that the quantity be moderate. The necessity for urging attention to this precaution, is rendered important from the fact, that most *Epileptics* are very apt to transgress the bounds of prudence in this particular. It is indeed seldom that we can get our patients to comply with our directions, *as to diet*, in any disease, and in none more so than *Epilepsy*. "If this cannot be accomplished, it would be well that the physician at once should decline the care of an epileptic patient."—(Dr. Cheyne's Essay on *Epilepsy*.)

In *Hysteria*, a judicious attention to diet is of much importance. This disease is very often connected with indigestion, in which case a moderate proportion of food should be taken; after meals, the patient should lie down

for an hour, and then take gentle exercise. Once a day only, is it necessary to eat animal food, and every kind of fluid aliment, such as gruel and broths, must be avoided. Tea and coffee, if taken at all, should be in small quantities and very weak; water must not be drank during dinner, and only in small portions after a meal. If the habit of the patient is delicate, a glass of pure Sherry wine, or a little weak brandy and water, may be allowed after dinner. Malt liquors cannot be recommended, as they are apt to disagree with most hysterical persons. The mind being more or less affected in Hysteria, a change of air and scene is absolutely requisite in convalescence. Having to contend with a morbid sensibility of the nervous system, every thing calculated to excite it must be carefully guarded against, and the attention directed to solid studies.

Very many, if not a majority of the diseases of the human race are of an inflammatory nature; therefore, every injunction of the physician, however strict it may be, should receive careful attention, and be rigidly observed. In all *acute* inflammations, complete abstinence, or at most a very small allowance of the mildest diet, may be requisite. If the termination be by suppuration, (the formation of matter,) a more nutritive diet; and even wine, may become necessary, but these points are not to be determined by *nurses* or *friends*, they must be regulated and fixed by the physician or surgeon *only*. In some diseases, it is true, there is no need of restraint as to the *amount* of food the patient may desire, or opposition to his inclinations, with respect to its *quality*; but in all *inflammations*, no such freedom can be exercised without great hazard.

*Dropsy.* There is less necessity for a rigid adherence, to low diet in this disease, than in other inflammatory affections. Though a great deal depends on the *causes* of

Dropsy, as influencing the diet most proper ; still, as a general rule, it should be *light* and *unstimulating*. The opinion is almost universal among all classes of persons, that *fluids* must not be taken by *dropsical* patients. The reason for this is—that the more the patient drinks, the greater will be the accumulation of the water. It is, however, *not* so, and so far from placing any restriction upon a dropsical patient, he should be allowed to drink as much as he pleases. A very excellent beverage in Dropsy is *Mustard Whey*, which is thus made:—Take half an ounce of bruised Mustard seeds, and one pint of Milk, boil them together until the milk is curdled, then strain it, and give a tea-cupful at a time, cold. It may be sweetened, or not, according to taste.

*Gout* and *Rheumatism*. When these diseases assume an acute form, the necessity for *abstinence* and *perfect repose* cannot be questioned. In habits weakened by indulgence, it is frequently supposed essential to their cure, that the diet should be of a stimulating quality, with a liberal supply of wine. I need scarcely say that such a course must prove injurious. It is to be hoped that in every case of Gout or Rheumatism, proper medical aid will be obtained. Those who have frequently suffered from either disease, are very apt to fancy that they can manage their own cases full as well as their physician ; an opinion in which I cannot coincide, as to my mind it is obviously absurd, and likely to lead to dangerous results. An old gouty patient, who thought he knew his own constitution well, mentioned to his physician the common adage, that “ *he ought to be able to cure himself, as every man above forty is either a fool or a physician.*” The Doctor replied, “ Then be assured, sir, you are no physician.”

It is quite customary after an attack of Gout, for the



convalescent to resume his usual habits with respect to diet and regimen. As a natural consequence, the plethora which caused the disease, gradually returns; another attack is the result; and the intervals between these becoming shorter and shorter, life is at last sacrificed on the altar of self-indulgence. Is this not a true picture?

The safest course for some after a paroxysm of Gout has subsided, is, to be very moderate in the use of animal food, and altogether to abstain from fermented liquors. But the convalescent is, in most instances, afraid of that “ignis fatuus” *debility*, and lest the Gout should get into his stomach, he partakes very liberally of nutritive food, and resorts to his potations of wine. Now, if the digestive organs become oppressed, and indirect debility induced by such a plan, the patient must not be at all surprised, or attach blame to any one but himself. Very few gouty or rheumatic subjects, can, or will be convinced of this; and the Physician, who would endeavor to *enforce* observance if he depend on public favor for a support, would not be likely to have an attack of Gout himself *from being overfed*. Man is an *obstinate* animal. Exercise *on foot*, as far as the strength will permit, should be taken, and as a salutary measure, is just as important as a well regulated diet. By this means, all the organs of the body are restored to their natural and healthy condition, and it will not be difficult to keep them so, if a due perseverance is observed. The shower bath once a day, with friction of the skin immediately afterwards, can be confidently recommended to all convalescents; for by this means the surface of the body will be preserved in a comfortable state, and the bowels will not be likely to need any artificial assistance. If these observances be necessary in one, *not* hereditarily predisposed to Gout, they of course become much more so in

these to whom this *fashionable* disease has descended, as a patrimonial inheritance.

When gout has become *habitual*, the subjects of it often despair of relief, and, making up their minds most philosophically to become desperate, they fly to artificial stimulants to keep up the energies of the constitution; drink wine, brandy and water, etc., and to allay pain when it pays them an accustomed visit, they resort with perfect confidence to a full dose of "*Wilson's Tincture*," or *Colchicum in some other form*. It is rather ungenerous, to be sure, to disturb these pleasant reflections, and to put a "veto" on such a comfortable state of mind, but the truth is, that "such a plan is like throwing tar barrels into a burning house." If the opposite course cannot *cure*, it can at all events mitigate the force of the attacks, render them *less* frequent, and be most likely to preserve the system from those disorganizations, which, when once established, *can never be removed*.

Under all circumstances we are very fond of quieting our fears by doctrines of our own creation. The Gouty invalid consoles himself by thinking, "Well, if I do suffer, Gout keeps off other diseases." This mental "castle building," however, is no better than the patient's philosophy; for instead of the Gout conferring any immunity from other affections, it renders the system *more* susceptible to such as seldom attack a healthy person.

In *Palsy*, all stimulating food, whether solid or fluid, must be rigidly abstained from, nor must this course be relaxed for some time after the patient has become convalescent. Change of air and scene, an easy state of the mind, and perfect freedom from every source of irritation, are equally indispensable. If, from the lower limbs having been affected, the invalid cannot take the necessary

exercise, an excellent substitute will be a *brisk friction* along the course of the spine.

*Extreme Corpulency* or Fatness, though not *always* so, is in many instances an actual disease, and may originate from such causes as produce the gout. When perfectly *natural*, fatness is not incompatible with health, or strength. The case of a German girl, mentioned by Mr. Wadd, affords an apt illustration of this fact. At the age of four years she weighed 150lbs., and at twenty years, 450lbs. Her physical strength was remarkable; for when six years old she could carry her mother, and at twenty, she thought it a mere joke to carry 250lbs., in each hand. Her arms measured *eighteen inches* in circumference, and the rest of her body in proportion. She eat very little, but drank a great deal. Her health was excellent: she had all the attributes of womanhood at *nine* years of age, and was only inconvenienced by a little shortness of breath on going up stairs.

When *Corpulency* becomes a disease, the strength is usually defective, the bowels costive, the pulse slow and languid, the skin white and *doughy*, the whole system irritable, and a disposition to sleep, strongly manifest in many cases. It might be supposed that abstinence and very active exercise would remedy these evils; but however salutary they may be as *preventives*, they seldom act as *remedies*, therefore medical treatment becomes essential. When removed, (and this is not often the case,) there must be no return to generous living, or the indulgence of much drink. Active exercise must be perseveringly used, and not more than *six* hours sleep taken out of the twenty-four. For reasons, which are abundantly satisfactory, it is known that fat people will not bear bleeding or purging, with any degree of freedom, and the

idea of reducing their bulk by such means, is altogether a mistaken one.

In *Green Sickness*, an early recourse to medical advice should *never* be neglected, lest it might terminate either in mental alienation, or sudden death. When the patient is convalescent, a mild, light, and nutritious diet, seems most suitable ; gentle exercise by walking or on horseback, should be taken, confining both within the limits of fatigue. The body, and particularly the lower extremities, should be warmly clothed, the mind amused, all sedentary occupations laid aside, and full confidence placed in the honor of the Physician. To him should be confided any mental anxiety, particularly if it be connected with *love*, which, but too often, is permitted to end in the sad reality of a broken heart.

Married women, and men, are sometimes liable to the disease, or at all events, something very much like it. No difference of treatment is required, and, in the management of convalescence, the same care is demanded, as though they were delicate single women or young girls.

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The affections of the head next claim our attention, and among these *Apoplexy* will be first noticed. The alarming nature of the symptoms sufficiently justify the immediate resort to prompt and energetic treatment. Time must not be lost by vain attempts to relieve the sufferer without medical assistance. If the attack does not prove fatal at the time, and is not succeeded by Palsy, yet the utmost caution is to be observed, lest the disease return. It would seem almost unnecessary to urge attention to the necessity of diet during convalescence ; but such is the



extreme thoughtlessness exhibited on some occasions, that a strict adherence to temperance both in meat and drink, must be insisted upon for the time, and indeed for the remainder of the individual's life. Even pleasurable pursuits must be cautiously moderated, all the passions subdued, and prolonged study and thought altogether abandoned. Too much sleep must also be avoided, no occupation continued which is likely to impede the circulation of the blood in the brain, and the neck is to be always free from the least constriction. If the invalid has been accustomed to play upon wind instruments, they must also be given up, for there is great danger to be apprehended if he continues to use them.

Like Apoplexy, an *Inflammation* of the *Brain* requires the most energetic treatment. The attention of the physician is just as much needed after convalescence has been established as before, and, until the recovery is complete, his services cannot with safety be dispensed with. If the patient should happen to eat too much, take over-exercise, or undergo much mental exertion, the results are to be dreaded, as a relapse from these causes is very apt to double the original danger. Perfect quietness must therefore be enjoined, and the most rigid regimen observed. The diet should be mild, unstimulating, and small in quantity, and the strength renewed by the natural efforts of the constitution, as they regain their powers.

In convalescence from that almost universally fatal disease in children, *Water in the Brain*, the very greatest attention is required to the state of the bowels. Any deviation from their natural state should be immediately communicated to the medical attendant, and receive his prompt interposition. During the continuance of the disease, the diet should be entirely farinaceous, and fluid ;

and when convalescence has actually supervened, it may then be changed to Milk, Beef-tea, and other preparations of that description,

*Inflammation of the Eyes*, during the actual presence of the disease, demands our greatest care and attention. The utmost quiet is necessary, also great moderation in diet, and not much exposure to either heat, light, cold, or indeed anything that can stimulate the highly excitable organ. Those who wait upon the sick, are very apt to err in some or all of these particulars—either closing up the bed curtains, or making the room very close and dark. A well regulated temperature and free ventilation, are to be insisted upon; *moderate* light is essential, and exercise in the open air when the weather admits. Experience has fully proved this course to be beneficial, and it should be always enforced by the physician or surgeon.

With nursing infants, the intervals between the times of suckling should, if practicable, be lengthened, and when this cannot be done without causing too much irritation to the child, a very gentle emetic may be given occasionally to relieve the stomach. For this purpose, nothing can be better than *Ipecacuanha Wine*, in teaspoonfull doses, every fifteen minutes, until full vomiting is produced. It is generally supposed that the eye requires to be kept very clean; therefore, the discharge is frequently and carefully removed. It would be better, however, to be less particular, as the matter generally forms a natural protection against the acrimony of the tears.

#### AFFECTIONS OF THE CHEST.

After an attack of *Croup*, it is best to confine the child to a light, unstimulating diet, given in moderate quantity. Plain preparations of Sago, Arrow-Root, etc., will be most

proper. Great care should be exercised as to the invalid's exposure to variations of temperature ; the degree of heat should not exceed 60 degrees of Fahrenheit ; east, and north-east winds are to be avoided, as also the night air. With these precautions, if the health does not improve, a *change* of air is advised ; from the city to the country, and the reverse, as the case may be.

In convalescence from a *Common Cold*, there is often experienced a very considerable degree of weakness, associated with a teasing, irritable cough, frequently difficult of management. As in Croup, a *change of air* is mainly to be depended on, with a proper regulation of the diet.

*Chronic Bronchitis* has, of late years, excited a good deal of attention, from its apparent frequency among public speakers, etc. Its medical treatment is not altogether satisfactory, but, as regards the period of convalescence, a change of climate is of the first importance. Sometimes, a few miles is quite sufficient for our purpose ; at others, nothing short of a long voyage or journey seems to be beneficial. If, from circumstances, the invalid cannot leave home, it will be advisable that he should confine himself to an apartment, regulated to the temperature of 65 degrees ; occasionally softening the air, by permitting the vapor of warm water to escape into the room. It is not essential that *animal* food should be wholly excluded ; a little may be taken once a day, and the diet generally be of a mild nature. Changes in the weather are to be carefully guarded against, and the surface kept uniformly warm, by flannel next the skin, covering the whole person. When no other course will answer the purpose, a *permanent* removal to a warm climate remains to be tried.

*Inflammation of the Lungs.*—When a patient is recovering from this disease, much attention is requisite to his diet, his exercise, and the temperature of his apartment. The first should be nutritive, but not at all exciting; the second ought to be regular and moderate, avoiding the evening air; and the last should be regulated to vary but little from sixty degrees Fahrenheit. Talking too much must be prevented, as it certainly would be productive of injury, and when the patient is in bed, it should be recollected that his shoulders are to be kept elevated, full as much so as during the existence of the disease. If, notwithstanding the careful observance of all these precautions, the invalid does not regain his previous health, a removal to a mild climate, *at least for the winter*, must be resorted to. Out of the United States, the islands of St. Croix, W. I., and Madeira, can be recommended. At home, we have St. Augustine, Key West, Indian Key, and Pensacola, Florida.

*Pleurisy*, which is an inflammation of the lining membrane of the chest, requires the same care and attention to diet and regimen during sickness and convalescence as the last mentioned disease. In pleurisy, however, a greater regard must be paid to both the quantity and the quality of the food; for, in many instances, a very trifling deviation may bring on a renewal of the inflammation. In some cases, where the disease assumes a chronic character, and water (serum) is effused into the cavity of the chest, the action of the lungs becomes circumscribed by its pressure, occasioning a greater or less difficulty of breathing. Here, some relaxation as to diet may be permitted, but only under the direction of the physician, whose attendance, under such circumstances, cannot with propriety be dispensed with.



In *Whooping Cough*, whether the patient be an adult or a child, the diet should be very plain and mild. Milk is probably as well adapted to our purposes as anything else, and as it supports the system well, without producing more than a salutary excitement, it is suited to most cases. Nothing but the breast milk should be given *in infancy*, and the nurse can hardly be too careful as to her own diet and the state of her mind. This caution becomes the more necessary, when we bring to our recollection the established fact, that *convulsions* sometimes depend on the *qualities* of the milk taken by infants. During the actual progress of the disease, a change of air is not essential, though very generally believed to be so; but, after the force of the malady has become exhausted, and convalescence is progressing, *then* a change of air will be beneficial. The cough is now only a habit, and therefore very readily removed by this change, which, in most cases, is all that is required to restore health. The absurd opinion, that an *impure* air even will be salutary, is not entitled to a moment's consideration. From the crowded city to the refreshing country, will be proper, and this course will often avert the danger of consumption, to which the delicate are very liable after Whooping Cough.

*Angina*.—This distressing affection is often connected with a predisposition to gout; indeed, it has been considered by many writers as a species of that disease, and therefore been called Diaphragmatic Gout. The regulation of the diet is, in this affection, of vital importance, and should be of as low a standard as the constitutional powers will admit. Vegetables, or farinaceous food, will be the most proper, and a small quantity of animal food may be allowed, such as chicken or mutton. Wine, malt liquors, strong tea and coffee, and in fact

every thing that has a tendency to quicken the circulation, should be wholly abstained from, and regarded as poisons. The invalid should remember, that whatever tends to excite him may cause a paroxysm of pain, nor will it be enough that he avoids all stimulating viands and beverages; he must take care, also, not to eat too much, even of the simplest and mildest food, lest the like effects may follow.

In *Palpitations* of the heart depending on organic disease of that organ, the same attention to diet, etc., will be necessary, both as regards the quantity and quality of the food, as recommended in *Angina*.

Among the diseases of the chest requiring particular attention to diet, is *Asthma*. Generally speaking, the manner of living, and the habits of persons affected with this disease, are such that they can have very little chance of getting rid of it; indeed, they but too frequently adopt the most direct course to prolong their suffering. The strictest attention to diet is essentially necessary, which should be light and easy of digestion, and never taken in such quantities as to exceed the powers of the stomach. Close heated rooms should also be avoided, and a due proportion of fresh air and exercise taken daily in pleasant weather. Asthmatics are very liable to take cold, therefore all sudden changes of temperature must be guarded against as much as possible.

#### AFFECTIONS OF THE STOMACH AND BOWELS.

After an attack of *acute Inflammation of the Stomach*, the safety of the patient depends, in a very great measure, upon his diet and regimen. Every possible source of excitement should be avoided, the food should be very simple, given in small quantities, and *invariably cold*, or

even iced. For a considerable time after recovery from this disease, the diet is to be confined to farinaceous substances, occasionally mixed with a little Beef-tea, or weak broths. Nothing should be drank but cold water. and that sparingly. If the diseased action has extended to, or exists in the bowels, constituting inflammation, the same course will be pursued; and during convalescence, Barley-water, or weak Chicken or Veal tea, may be given at intervals of three or four hours. The iced Almond-emulsion forms an excellent drink in these cases.

*Indigestion*, or Dyspepsia, is a disease of very frequent occurrence, and often difficult of management, both during the attack, and after the more severe symptoms have been removed. While the paroxysm lasts, the treatment should be simple and slightly stimulant; a cup of moderately strong Coffee, a little sweetened and without milk, or beef-tea, and a small piece of dry toast, may be taken with advantage. Mustard, Cayenne pepper, and every kind of spice, are to be abstained from altogether. Indeed, all condiments, except *salt*, will prove hurtful. In confirmed dyspeptics, the treatment is sufficiently comprehensive, as to the kind and quality of the food allowed. Particular rules can be adapted to particular cases; but, generally speaking, the invalid should be restricted to a small amount of animal diet, a moderate share of *well boiled* vegetables, and a very limited allowance of drink. For breakfast, Coffee, with a little sugar and milk, is much better than tea. With this may be taken a small quantity of stale bread or toast, a fresh egg soft boiled, and a little *fresh* butter. For dinner, the patient may partake, in moderation, of poultry, venison, mutton, and winged game, all of which should be roasted, and never cooked a second time. Fat meat, gelatinous meat, such as pig,

lamb, veal, all smoked or salted meats, sausages, rich soups, fish, fish sauces, and melted butter, should be avoided. The most wholesome vegetables are Cauliflower, Asparagus, young Peas, French Beans, and very mealy Potatoes. Those likely to prove hurtful, are, old Peas and Beans, Cucumbers, waxy Potatoes, and Jerusalem artichokes. Rice is strongly recommended, plain boiled, and eaten with a little meat gravy free from fat. Every description of pastry, dumplings, new bread, custards, creams, and cheese, are not to be touched, and justly regarded as positively hurtful. If taken in the *early* part of the day, *Fruits* may be eaten, but not after dinner. Strawberries, Peaches when ripe, Nectarines, and Grapes, are the least injurious. Those decidedly improper are, Apples, Currants, Cherries, Gooseberries, Plums, Melons, Figs, fresh or dried, and every kind of nut. The very best drink is a little Sherry Wine and water, taken *after* dinner, and not with it. All sweet wines, ale, and mucilaginous and acid fluids, should be avoided with scrupulous care.

Indigestion is often attended with much *pain*, indicative of an irritable and sensitive state of the stomach. In these cases, it is obvious that the diet should be of such a character as to require the least effort on the part of that organ to digest it. It should be partly animal, partly farinaceous; not too fluid nor too dry. Well-boiled tender vegetables, with mutton or poultry, are admissible; but *Milk*, either in its natural state, or in conjunction with farinaceous substances, is decidedly the best diet that can be taken. As drink, sherry, weak brandy-and-water, and occasionally a little good porter, are all proper; but the quantity must be small, not exceeding a wine-glassful at a time. In all cases, the food should be eaten slowly, and thoroughly chewed.



We occasionally meet with a form of dyspepsia, in which there is cramp of the stomach, with nausea and vomiting in the morning of a thick phlegm. This is more particularly noticed in elderly persons, and calls for a diet consisting chiefly of the lean of mutton and poultry, and a very small proportion of vegetables. But little bread is required, and the invalid must not touch milk, cheese, eggs, or fish. Coffee is more suitable than tea, for breakfast; and for dinner, a glass of sherry, or weak brandy-and water, is best. Malt liquors of every kind are injurious; indeed, they often are the exciting causes of the disease. A broad bandage of flannel, carefully applied around the body, is very salutary; and if, in addition to this, the warm bath is taken once or twice a week, the patient will experience much comfort, and be considerably benefitted thereby.

Instances of dyspepsia are sometimes met with, of a very aggravated and distressing nature. In these, the countenance is sallow and sunk, the skin cool, the teeth covered with a dark fur, and the breath offensive. Here a little wine-whey will be serviceable, or weak wine-and-water. Small bits of *ice*, taken into the mouth, and permitted to dissolve slowly, are very grateful to the patient, and well calculated to allay his excessive thirst.

In *Dysentery*, the diet should consist of the mildest farinaceous matters, given in small quantity at a time. In their preparation, they should neither be too thick, or too thin; if the former, injury may result from mechanical irritation, and the latter is apt to excite griping, from the extrication of air. All solid animal food is to be avoided, and the flannel band used as directed for dyspepsia.

*Diarrhœa*.—A properly regulated diet is of as much importance in this disease as any other. At first, arrow-root,

sago, a little ground rice pudding, and other farinaceous substances, are the most suitable ; and after some days, when the irritation has considerably abated, boiled rice, with milk, chicken, and chicken-broth, may be allowed. In long continued cases, when there is considerable debility, and the looseness is attributable to a relaxation of the mucous membrane of the bowels, food of a more nutritious quality, should be taken moderately.

Those who are subject to *Diarrhœa*, cannot be too careful in their diet. They should particularly avoid eating cucumbers, mushrooms, melons, salad, acid fruits, such as plums and currants, etc., also fat pork, game which has been long kept, every kind of pastry, and various other articles known to be injurious to persons with weak bowels. Flannel should be worn next the skin, and every precaution taken against sudden exposures, which might obstruct the perspiration, and thus prove exceedingly detrimental, if not dangerous.

Convalescence, after an attack of *Cholera*, is often remarkably tedious, and a relapse very likely to be produced, by even trifling irregularities of diet. It is not enough to be particular during the existence of the disease ; but, for some considerable time after the symptoms have disappeared, the diet should consist of a very moderate quantity of vegetable matter only. The return to animal food, should be very gradual, the feet kept warm, and the skin maintained in a healthy condition by wearing flannel next it for a long time after recovery.

*Diseases of the Liver.*—Without the strictest attention to regimen and diet, in all cases of recovery from these diseases, no permanent benefit can be derived from any course of remedial treatment. Habits of intemperance must be wholly abandoned, and every kind of stimulant,

whether of food or drink carefully refrained from. Such articles of food only should be taken, as are known to be mild and unirritating. It has been observed by Mons. Portal, a celebrated French physician, that *great eaters* have invariably diseased and enlarged livers. The necessity therefore, for circumspection and regularity as to diet and regimen, is sufficiently obvious. If, in any case of diseased liver, structural alterations have actually commenced, the physician can do little more than look on, and lament the inefficiency of his science.

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Throughout the preceding pages, many articles have been mentioned as proper food for the sick and convalescent, without stating how they are best prepared for use. Directions therefore for some of the most important preparations seem called for, to render my remarks the more generally useful.

*Mucilage of Sago* is prepared by soaking a tablespoonful of the Sago in a pint of soft water for two hours, then boil for fifteen minutes, stirring it well during the boiling. Sweeten with *sugar*, and flavor with *lemon-juice*.

*Mucilage of Tapioca*.—Prepared in the same manner as Sago, and with the same quantities, though from its greater solubility, it requires only half the time for soaking and boiling.

*Grit Gruel*.—Wash three ounces of Grits in *cold* water, then put them into four pints of *fresh soft* water, and boil slowly to two pints, then strain through a fine sieve.

*Oat-meal Gruel*.—Take two ounces of *Oat-meal*, and a pint and a half of soft water. Rub the meal in a bowl, with the back of a spoon, in a little of the water, pouring

this off several times, or until it is not milky. Boil that which has been poured off, until it forms a soft, thick, mucilage. It may be sweetened and flavored with lemon, or mixed with milk, according to circumstances. Some persons add Butter and Honey, which however, are inadmissible in all inflammations.

*Mucilage of Iceland Moss.*—When this article is employed as a diet for the sick or convalescent, it should be freed from the bitter quality which it contains, by soaking it in *warm* water, containing a small portion of Carbonate of Soda, for 24 hours, then pressing it forcibly in a coarse cloth. One ounce of the Moss, is to be put into a quart of water, slowly boiled down to a pint, and strained. It may be sweetened and acidulated, or mixed with milk, as may be directed. It does *not* possess any specific virtue for the cure of Consumption.

The *Mucilage of Carrageen*, is made by boiling one ounce of it, in a pint and a half of water. This forms a kind of jelly, which, when properly flavored, in an excellent diet for invalids, whose strength needs support.

*Mucilage of Rice.*—Take an ounce of good Rice, wash it clean, then soak it for three hours in a quart of warm water, and, at the end of that time, boil it another hour, and strain. When flavored, or mixed with milk as the other mucilages, it forms an excellent demulcent for the sick, particularly in diarrhœa, and bowel complaints generally.

*Ground Rice Milk.*—Take one tablespoonful of ground Rice, a pint and a half of milk, and half an ounce of Candied Lemon-peel. Rub the Rice smooth with the milk, and then add the Lemon-peel cut small, boil for half an hour, and strain while it is hot. A most excellent beverage for early convalescence.

*Bread Panada.*—To any quantity of stale Bread, add



as much Water as will form a thick pulp, cover it, and let it stand to soak for an hour. Then rub up a small quantity of Sugar, with two tablespoonfuls of Milk, mix this with the bread, and boil for ten minutes, constantly stirring.

#### ANIMAL PREPARATIONS.

*Beef Tea.*—Take *half a pound* of good lean Beef, cut it into *thin slices*, spread these in a hollow dish, sprinkle them with a little salt, and pour upon them a *pint and a half* of boiling water. Cover the dish with a plate, and place it near the fire for an hour, then putting the whole into a suitable vessel, boil it for fifteen minutes, strain it carefully, and it is fit for use.

*Chicken Tea.*—Take a small Chicken, clean it, and free it from the *skin* and *all the fat*. Then cut it into small bits, (bones and all), and having put these into a pan with a small portion of salt, pour over it a *quart* of boiling water; cover the pan, and boil slowly for *two hours*. Let it then remain near the fire for half an hour, and strain through a seive.

Both these preparations are of sufficient strength for any invalid, who requires an animal diet of a mild character. With a little spice, and a few vegetables, they can be made rather more palatable, and suited to actual convalescence.

*Veal Tea.*—Take one pound of Veal, free from fat, cut it small, pour on it a *pint and a half* of boiling water, and then boil it for *half an hour*.

*Mutton Tea* is made in precisely the same manner, and if the patient desires it, an ounce of Pearl Barley, previously washed, and soaked in boiling water for half an hour, may be boiled with the meat, and the tea strained before using.

## PREPARATION OF DRINKS.

*Distilled Water*, is useful in diseases of the Kidneys, Cancerous affections, Gout, Consumption, and Scrofula. Being free from every foreign ingredient, its adaptation to many useful purposes, cannot be questioned. To obtain it, fix a curved tin tube three or four feet long, to the spout of a tea kettle, and place the open end in a jar, standing in a basin of cold water. Keep the water in the kettle gently boiling.

*Toast Water*.—On half a slice of stale bread, carefully toasted, pour one quart of water, which has been boiled and cooled. Let it stand two hours, and strain. It may be flavored with a small bit of Orange, or Lemon-peel. Dyspeptics, should always drink water either very cold, or very hot. In Coughs and Colds it should be taken warm.

*Apple Water*.—Cut two large Apples into slices, and pour over them a pint of boiling water. After an hour, pour off the water, and sweeten to the taste.

*Lemon-Peel-Tea*.—Pare the rind of one Lemon, (which has been previously rubbed with powdered loaf sugar,) put the peelings and the sugar into a jar, and pour over them a quart of boiling water. When cold, pour off the fluid, and add one tablespoonful of Lemon-juice.

*Linseed Tea*.—One ounce of Linseed, *not* bruised, two drachms of Liquorice root, bruised, and one pint of boiling soft water. Cover the vessel, and let it stand near the fire for four hours, then strain it. Linseed tea should be made fresh every day; if kept, it becomes ropy, and very soon spoils.

*White-Wine-Whey*.—Two thirds of a pint of Milk, and one third Water, to make up the pint. Two glasses of Sherry-wine, and a tablespoonful of sugar. Place the milk and water on the fire, and just as it is going to boil,

pour into it the wine and sugar ; let it boil fifteen minutes, and strain off the whey.

*Egg Brandy.*—This preparation is an excellent one, administered in the low forms of Typhus and other fevers. It is made by taking three wine-glassfuls of Brandy, the same quantity of Cinnamon water, the yolks of two Eggs, half an ounce of white sugar, and two drops of Oil of Cinnamon. Mix the eggs first with the water, the sugar, and the oil, shaking them well together ; then add the brandy by degrees, stirring it carefully all the time.

*Goat's Milk.*—When it can be procured, is far superior to any other in certain forms of disease. It is not often, however, that we can get it, therefore, an artificial preparation must be substituted. The following receipt for making *Artificial Goat's Milk*, will be found an excellent imitation.

Take one ounce of fresh Suet, cut it into small pieces, and tie them in a muslin bag, but not so tight, as to compress them in the least. Boil this in a quart of Cow's Milk, and sweeten it with a small quantity of white sugar-candy. In pulmonary consumption, and Scrofulous emaciation, nothing can be better ; and for infants brought up with the spoon, it is decidedly superior to any thing else.

*Sago Posset.*—Boil two ounces of Sago in a quart of water, until it forms a mucilage, then rub half an ounce of fine Loaf-sugar on the rind of a Lemon, and put it, with a teaspoonful of Tincture of Ginger, into half a pint of Sherry-wine ; add this mixture to the Sago mucilage, and boil the whole for five minutes. A wine-glassful taken cold every four hours, is an excellent cordial in cases of debility.

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The preceding preparations being more properly those best suited to the sick, it now becomes necessary to give a few receipts for such as are required for the convalescent, which are of a character more stimulating and more nutritive.

*Boiled Flour and Milk.*—Take any quantity of Wheat flour, and knead it into a ball with water. Tie this firmly in a linen cloth, and boil it slowly for twelve hours. Place it before the fire to dry: and after removing the cloth, separate the thick skin from the outside, and again dry it. For use, grate about a tablespoonful, and boil it with a pint of Milk, then sweeten to the taste. A very good diet when convalescing from Diarrhœa, and Dysentery, and in Emaciation.

*Arrow-Root Pudding.*—To arrow-root mucilage, made as before directed, add one pint of boiling milk. With this mix one egg, and a tablespoonful of Sugar previously rubbed together, and either bake or boil it.

*Rice and Apples.*—Boil the Rice sufficiently, pour off the water, and let it stand before the fire for fifteen minutes. Having stewed the Apples separately, mix them with the rice, and add a small quantity of Sugar. It may be as well to observe here, that too much sugar does not agree with convalescents generally.

*Simple Rice Pudding.*—Wash two tablespoonsful of Rice, and simmer them in a pint and a half of Milk, until the Rice is soft, then add two Eggs beaten up with an ounce of Sugar. Bake for three-fourths of an hour in a slow oven. In some cases, wine may be added, but only when directed by the physician.

*Tapioca Pudding.*—The yolks of two Eggs, and half an ounce of Sugar, beat together; stir this into a pint of Tapioca Mucilage, made with Milk. Bake in a slow



oven. In the same manner may be made Sago, or Arrow Root puddings—all of them being very wholesome for convalescents.

When recovering from sickness, and the diet is restricted to vegetables, a mixture of boiled Carrots and Turnips, with Milk, forms an excellent dish. It is made by boiling separately, in three successive waters, the Carrots and Turnips peeled. Dry them, and then mash together with sweet Milk and a little Salt. Stand it before the fire until the surface is dry. With most persons, this is a very palatable dish, and the more they use it the more will they like it.

Nearly every kind of plain boiled vegetable may be used by the convalescent, if it is sufficiently cooked; and, as a general rule, two waters should be used in the boiling. With the addition of salt, and leaving the vessel uncovered, vegetables seldom lose their green color.

Preparations of *animal* matter are generally given when convalescence has considerably advanced, and the invalid can bear stimulation with advantage. The manner of cooking these is pretty well known to most nurses and housekeepers, and provided they are not too greasy, or too highly seasoned with pepper, etc., any of them can be used according to fancy. Those most usually ordered by the physician, are Rice Soup, Chicken Broth, Chicken Panada, Rice and Gravy, Mutton Broth, Tripe, if well cooked, Sweetbreads, Fowl, and Rice, etc. Animal jellies are also proper, when taken occasionally, though they are not as digestible as most persons suppose.

It is absolutely essential that due precaution be exercised by the convalescent, in the regulation of his diet, as to its quantity and quality; the periods when food is most proper, and the bodily and mental exercise that ought to follow.

The best time for eating, according to Diogenes, is "for a rich man when he can get an appetite, and for a poor man when he can get food." Habit, however, exercises a very great influence in regulating our appetites. Three meals are generally considered sufficient, and invalids should never indulge in more. If, from habit, supper must be taken, this repast must be very light, and eaten at least an hour before going to bed.

In the time of Queen Elizabeth, when "liver complaints," and dyspepsia were unknown, the breakfast consisted of "half a chine of mutton, or else a chine of beef boiled," and the children had "a chickyng, or else three mutton bones boiled, with certain quarts of beer and wine." Families rose at six in the morning, and had set on their table for breakfast, a quart of beer, a quart of wine, two pieces of salt fish, half a dozen red herrings, and a dish of sprats. They dined at ten, and supped at four in the afternoon. Now, the breakfast hour is ten, the dinner at four, and supper at midnight. Speaking of supper, Mr. Pennant says, "I avoid the meal of excess, a supper; and my soul rises with vigor to its employs, and I hope does not disappoint the end of its Creator."

With regard to the quality and consistence of our food, that is best which is simple, nourishing, and easily digested. Strength is not always derived from the use of a strong and stimulating diet; for, in the end, it will prove injurious, and be followed by exhaustion.

No particular rule can be laid down as to the quantity of food required for the sustenance of the body, as this must of course depend upon habit, constitution, difference of sex, age, and manner of life. To confine any individual to an exact weight of food, is not consistent with reason; for quantity must be accommodated to the amount of exercise taken, the state of the digestive organs, climate,

season of the year, and quality. "To eat moderately and slowly," says Dr. Wilson Phillip, "is often of greater consequence than any rule of Diet."

Exercise taken immediately after a meal, very nearly suspends the process of digestion, and is contrary to our inclinations, in most instances. If it can be conveniently indulged, a complete state of rest, both bodily and mental, is proper and salutary.

It is now perhaps prudent, that my remarks be brought to a termination. They may indeed by some, be thought too much extended already, particularly by such as are fond of "good living," and unrestrained self-indulgence. I shall therefore take my leave, and in the language of old Galen, written 1700 years ago, "I beseech all persons, who shall read this treatise, not to degrade themselves to a level with the brutes, or the rabble, by gratifying their sloth ; or by eating and drinking promiscuously whatever pleases their palates. But, whether they understand physic or not, let them consult their reason, and observe what agrees, and what disagrees with them, that, like wise men, they may adhere to the use of such things as conduce to their health. And let them be assured, that by a diligent observation of this rule, they may enjoy a good share of health, and seldom stand in need of physic or physicians."

"DIOS ES EL QUE SANA, Y EL MÉDICO LLEVA LA PLATA."







